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General Assembly
Fifty-second Session

Official Records

80th plenary meeting
Wednesday, 4 February 1998, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Udovenko ..... (Ukraine)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

The President: I think that the punctuality and attendance of the General Assembly have greatly deteriorated. Therefore, we have to resume future meetings of the plenary session of the General Assembly on time. I appeal to everybody, because we have another very important meeting after this one. Therefore, I would be very grateful to fellow representatives for observing punctuality.

Agenda item 120 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/52/785)

The President: I should like, in keeping with the established practice, to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/52/785, containing a letter addressed to me by the Secretary-General. In this document, the Secretary-General informs the Assembly that 39 Member States are in arrears in the payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I should further like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of this information?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 24 (*continued*)

Building a peaceful and better world through sport and the Olympic ideal

Solemn appeal made by the President of the General Assembly on 2 February 1998 in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce (A/52/782)

The President: I shall now read out the text of the solemn appeal I made on 2 February 1998 in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce.

> "On 25 November 1997, the General Assembly adopted resolution 52/21, in which it urged Member States to observe the Olympic Truce during the XVIII Olympic Winter Games, which will be held in Nagano, Japan, from 7 to 22 February 1998.
>
> "The idea of the Olympic Truce dates back to an ancient Greek tradition of *ekecheiria*, in keeping with which all hostilities would cease during the Games.

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"Today the Olympic Truce has become an expression of mankind's desire to build a world based on the rules of fair competition, peace, humanity and reconciliation. Moreover, the Olympic Truce epitomizes a bridge from the old and wise tradition to the most compelling purpose of the United Nations — the maintenance of international peace and security. As the most visible illustration of this connection in goals and aspirations between the Olympic movement and the United Nations, the International Olympic Committee decided, starting from this year, to fly the United Nations flag at all competition sites of the Olympic Games. This tradition will commence at the Olympic Winter Games in Nagano.

"The forthcoming Nagano Games, which will be the last Olympic Winter Games of the century, should become a symbolic link to the next millennium, an important relay point in humanity's quest for a world free of hatred and war, a world where ideals of peace, goodwill and mutual respect form the basis of relations among countries.

"That goal may still remain elusive, but if the Olympic Truce can help us to bring about even a brief respite from conflict and strife it will send a powerful message of hope to the international community. With the United Nations flag flying in Nagano at the XVIII Olympic Winter Games, adherence to the Truce will gain even greater symbolism.

"I therefore solemnly appeal to all States to demonstrate their commitment to the spirit of fraternity and understanding among peoples by observing the Olympic Truce during the Nagano Games.

"I urge all those who are now engaged in armed struggle — for whatever reasons and wherever it might be — to suspend hostilities in keeping with the observance. I urge everybody, individually and collectively, to take the initiative to abide by the Olympic Truce as a way of promoting goodwill and encouraging the peaceful settlement of conflicts in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations." [A/52/782]

May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to take note of the solemn appeal in connection with the observance of the Olympic Truce?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 24?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 116 (*continued*)

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999

Report of the Fifth Committee (Part II) (A/52/744/Add.1)

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the report of the Fifth Committee that is before it today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote or position.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendation of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records. May I remind members that under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401 the Assembly agreed that

"When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting, unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I also remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendation contained in the report of the Fifth Committee, I should like to advise representatives that we are going to proceed to take a decision in the same manner as was done in the Committee.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of part II of its report. The draft resolution,

entitled "Salary and retirement allowance of the Secretary-General and salary and pensionable remuneration of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme", was adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly too wishes to adopt the draft resolution?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 52/225).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 116, which henceforth will be entitled "Programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999".

The meeting rose at 10.25 a.m.